

Top Secret



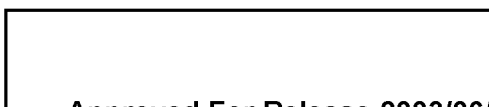
DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Central Intelligence Bulletin

Top Secret

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9 September 1970



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Approved For Release 2003/06/25 : CIA-RDP79T00975A017100040002-6

Approved For Release 2003/06/25 : CIA-RDP79T00975A017100040002-6

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Approved For Release 2003/06/25 : CIA-RDP79T00975A017100040002-6

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Approved For Release 2003/06/25 : CIA-RDP79T00975A017100040002-6

Bahamas: Economic problems could cause serious political difficulties for Prime Minister Pindling.

The recent trend toward more nationalistic economic policies and tighter government controls over foreign investment reportedly has undermined investor confidence and led to a significant loss of government revenues. Pindling's parliamentary bloc, upset by the economic slump, is said to be exerting pressure for cabinet changes. Some of the prime minister's rivals in the cabinet are resisting changes, however, possibly with a view toward creating a government crisis in order to force Pindling from power.

Although Pindling has not consistently exercised firm leadership in his three and a half years in power, he has proved a relatively adroit politician and his opponents have repeatedly backed off from any showdown with him. Any wholesale shakeup, however, might lead his ministerial foes to join with those parliamentary members in his party who are dissatisfied with current policies; together they would present a formidable challenge to Pindling's leadership.

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